

# BREAKERS AHEAD.

## A Statement

MADE BY

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AT A

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W. EVANS DARBY, LL.D.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I have prepared, somewhat carefully, a statement which will put before you, in fewer words than if I attempted a free talk on the subject, exactly what it is we have to face.

## A TIMELY ILLUSTRATION.

In to-day's *Times* there is an account of the Annual Meeting of the National Service League. This is described as "an association recently formed to promote the legislative adoption of compulsory naval and military training for national defence." It is just a year old, for its first annual meeting was held yesterday in the Royal United Service Institute, the Duke of Wellington being in the chair. The League, the report stated, "had overcome a mass of prejudice, due, on the one hand, to absurd misconceptions connected with the word conscription, and on the other to ignorance of our own past history and the consequent assumption that there was something new and un-English in the idea that the citizen should be compelled to fit himself for the duties of home defence."

## OBJECTS OF THE NATIONAL SERVICE LEAGUE.

The Duke of Wellington said, "the League was agreed on certain points, which were that it was necessary to promote

the physical training of boys at school, and that all young men should go through a modified form of service, so that they might be capable of bearing arms. There was," he assured the influential meeting, and through it the outside public, "no question of compulsory service for sending men abroad, but what they desired was a service modelled somewhat on the Swiss system." His Grace added that, "he had received a letter from Mr. Seddon, the Premier of New Zealand, in which *he* said that it was essential to the well-being of the Empire that all should be trained men, more especially in view of the conscription followed by other nations. The necessity for having a reserve of trained men was painfully apparent during the late war, and the formation of such a reserve would be a national benefit and lead to the stability of the Empire."

The question of compulsory service for sending men abroad, it may be observed in passing, would speedily settle itself, as in the case of the men sent from Ireland in the late war, if only the proposed **Establishment of Trained Reserves** were once secured. In concluding his speech, the chairman mentioned that "only eight per cent. of the men of this country gave any personal service towards the defence of the Empire."

#### THE MOVEMENT FOR CONSCRIPTION.

The holding of such a meeting is significant enough. Its real emphasis, however, lies in the fact that it is one of the latest incidents in the **Movement for Conscription** to which Lieut.-Gen. Lord Methuen referred in the speech at New College, Oxford, on Sunday week last (17th May) in which, after commending compulsory service because—

"It gave to foreign armies a leaven of educated men, the men who put the whole tone in the regiment; it also put into the regiment and the country men of much finer physique than would be the case in ordinary circumstances," he said that, "*he was proud to associate himself in this movement with men like Lord Wolseley, Lord Roberts and Sir George White.*"

This admission is as important as it was unexpected.

## THIS A TWO-FOLD MOVEMENT.

The "movement" referred to by Lord Methuen has shown itself in a two-fold form. There is the official movement on the part of the military authorities and others co-operating with them, and also the organised amateur or irresponsible movement for "universal compulsory military service." The two do not seem to have any connection, indeed often appear as if wholly disconnected, but beyond doubt there is a real and vital, if not an organic, union between them. They have similar aims, and move towards the same end.

## THE OFFICIAL OR RESPONSIBLE MOVEMENT.

The official movement is what is doubtless specially referred to by Lord Methuen. It has appeared in the House of Lords, when the Government asked to be furnished with the powers of the Militia Ballot Act, **so as to be prepared for emergencies**, even while it checked the too forward zeal of its "irresponsible" supporters. It has appeared in the army discussions in the House of Commons, in the treatment of the volunteer forces by Mr. Brodrick, and in other ways, notably in the assiduous development of movements among the young, and the capture of the educational establishments of the country.

## LORD SALISBURY'S WARNING.

During the discussions in the House of Lords of a Bill, introduced by Earl Wemyss (one of the "irresponsibles"), to make immediate use of the Militia Ballot, Lord Salisbury uttered words which, while they indicate the real character of the movement, also carry their own salutary warning.

"The Marquis of Salisbury said (February 20th, 1900), what they had to consider was what would be the result of the motion if passed. The Bill introduced last year would not put the ballot machinery into motion, and a good many other things would have to be taken into account before the ballot machinery could be worked.

"Supposing such a Bill passed, what would be the effect in other countries? Besides, if they made that supreme effort to provide them-



selves with a kind of defence to which they were not accustomed, they must be certain of success, and if they did not succeed it would give an impression of defencelessness which would add to our dangers.

*"If they introduced the ballot they would not be able to stop short of conscription. And when conscription was adopted there would be other difficulties to surmount. Such a Bill would carry excitement, possibly consternation into every family."*

"It was suggested that if they pressed people too much to go into the militia they would go into the volunteers. He suspected rather that they would go over the water into other countries.

"Do not let them attempt such legislation until they had a very fair certainty of success, because it would produce an amount of contention, panic, and possibly sinister anticipation on the part of their enemies which would make them regret that they were not content to go on developing the present system."

#### OTHER UTTERANCES.

The importance of the work done by the Christian Churches in training youths for the army, and the real inwardness of the Brigade movements, appear in the constant utterances of the generals and other officers who from time to time appear as their patrons. In the speech at Oxford, for instance, Lord Methuen went on to speak of the value of Cadet Corps and Church Lads' Brigades, and said, so long as they did not have conscription, no Government would find the stamp of men required in the army unless training of the description he had mentioned were given. Recommending the work of the Oxford House in Bethnal Green, which he was supporting, he said that "he felt sure that supporting this work they were not only bringing honour to the University, but doing lasting good to the Empire."

Still more recently, Lieut.-General Lord Grenfell (commanding the Fourth Army Corps), while inspecting at Windsor some battalions of the Oxford Diocesan Regiment of the Church Lads' Brigade, the Bishop of Oxford also taking part, said that, "as a soldier of many years' experience, he heartily welcomed their *se mi-Military organisation*, because he felt sure that the members of it would be useful to the country if their services were ever

required for home defence. In a country where *no conscription existed, it was the duty of every citizen to make himself acquainted with a certain amount of drill, so as to be of use to his country if his services were required.* He did not speak as a recruiting sergeant, but felt sure, that if any of the lads went into the army, they would turn out good and honest soldiers after their training in the Church Lads' Brigade. He complimented them on their smart, soldierly appearance, and the splendid way in which they had gone through their various movements." Lord Grenfell also spoke in high terms of the officers, who were afterwards introduced to him by Colonel Waller, who was in command. The Duchess of Teck distributed the prizes at the close of the competitions.

#### OUTLINE OF THE MOVEMENT.

The very existence of an official military class involves the unceasing development of the system, but the "movement" referred to has been carried on very vigorously, and with a very clear and definite object. Its origin may be roughly dated back to the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of our late Queen, which were undoubtedly intended as an object lesson and preliminary preparation. It really commenced earlier, however, and its progress may be illustrated by two or three facts in connection with one of the names mentioned by Lord Methuen.

In the year 1887, Lord Wolseley, addressing a meeting of a Debating Society in Gower Street, described the Military System of the Continent as a curse which some of the inhabitants of the countries afflicted by it escaped through emigration, but from which this country was happily free.

Two years later (at Birmingham) at a meeting presided over by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, he boldly advocated conscription as a necessity, and a benefit for this country, the reasons given being the difficulty of obtaining recruits for the army, and the growth of our Empire.

Eight years later still, that is at the time of the Jubilee celebrations in 1897, Lord Wolseley again opened this educational campaign in a speech at Glasgow, in which he asked for a dozen more battalions for the army—a demand which was succeeded by an intimation (showing clearly concerted action) that the coming Budget estimates would show an

enormous increase of at least one and a-half millions for the army. He was followed by Mr. Brodrick, Sir Robert Finlay, and a host of other very earnest educationalists, since when the "movement," with its various aspects and forms has proceeded most vigorously.

#### LORD ROSEBERY'S TESTIMONY.

The hopes and aims of the movement, as well as the imminence of the danger, were thus indicated by Lord Rosebery, during these memorable debates on the Militia Ballot in the House of Lords. It was said, I believe, in reply to the Marquis of Lansdowne, then Minister for War, who had checked the "too forward zeal" of Lord Wemyss and his associates. Lord Rosebery said: "I do not see that it is as immeasurably remote as the noble Marquis considers, that some form of compulsory service should have to be introduced to meet the growing exigencies of the Empire; and I am quite sure that neither from that nor any other sacrifice will the nation recoil, to preserve the predominance of this Empire."

#### MR. FREDERICK MADDISON'S ESTIMATE.

Representing the opposite pole of political doctrine, and an entirely different set of national interests, Mr. Frederick Maddison, who was then a member of the House of Commons, thus described this movement:—

"About the ultimate answer of the working people of this country to the movement in question there can be little doubt. That they will not recoil from any sacrifice needed to protect the Fatherland from danger is certain; but that is a different thing from being willing to place at the disposal of any Imperialistic Government—Tory or Liberal—a nation of armed men to pursue the will o' the wisp of conquest and domination.

"It is only so much wasted talk to pretend that conscription would be necessary for home defence. Every one knows that our army is wanted abroad, and that however compulsory service were introduced at first, its real object would be to enable us to place on foreign service vast bodies of troops, which would have to be supplied constantly from the home forces. The goal of the advocates of



conscription is to convert us into a great military nation, so that we may become a first-class military Power as we are now the supreme sea Power."

The subsequent history of the movement has absolutely verified the description and justified this clear and sagacious prevision.

#### THE PERSONNEL OF THE MOVEMENT.

Some time ago the *Berliner Post*, the official newspaper, said that "Conscription was the policy of the English Conservative party as a whole," and added that it "would be a good thing for Germany"; how, it did not say. It would be more correct to say that the Imperialist policy adopted by some of the Conservative party, and by some others, includes conscription as its goal. As a prominent French Statesman remarked only a day or two ago: "You must develop your forces because of your Empire" (this is what Lord Rosebery says). "You have ceased to be an insular, and become a Continental power, you must therefore adopt a corresponding policy." As a matter of course, military men are identified with their profession, but not all military men are conscriptionist. The leaders of the movement are said by Lord Methuen to be Lord Roberts, Lord Wolseley, and Sir George White. But a letter which appeared in the *Times*, of April 18th, containing a plea on behalf of "A London Working Boys' Cadet Corps," bears also the following names: Brownlow, R. K. Causton, Ian Hamilton, Henry Hildyard, Octavia Hill, Frederick Maurice, Methuen, F. D. Mocatta, Edw. Roffen, George S. White, Wolseley. A postscript to this letter shows its official character, for it says, "By kind permission of the Countess of Selborne, a meeting will be held at the Admiralty on Thursday, April 30th, at 3.30 p.m., in support of the movement, at which Lord Methuen will take the chair."

#### THE GENERAL OR IRRESPONSIBLE MOVEMENT.

The other side of the movement hardly calls for detailed comment; though it, too, is important, and as in the case of the official side of the movement, there is so much to notice; a few salient points must suffice.

## THE "NINETEENTH CENTURY" MAGAZINE.

In January, 1900, there appeared a number of one of the monthly reviews, to which this striking reference was made:—

The contents of the new number of the *Nineteenth Century* are a signal proof of the imminent danger of an innovation utterly repugnant to English habits and ideals. It is not only that Colonel Sir G. S. Clarke and Mr. Sidney Low discourse respectively on "The Defence of the Empire and the Militia Ballot" and "The Military Weakness of England and the Militia Ballot"—each of them rather a clumsy euphemism for conscription. The subject is gravely introduced in an editorial note in which we are told that the country is "brought face to face with a great and grave alternative." The crisis cannot be "further evaded or ignored." The editor assures us under his own hand that we must either contract the boundaries of our Empire or we must expand our military forces until they are sufficient to defend from all aggression the vast inland frontiers over sea, which our navy cannot reach; and this we must do without dangerously depleting these islands of their second line of defence.

Sir George Clarke, in his article, is no less emphatic:—

If the splendid fabric of the Empire is to be handed down as the inviolate and inviolable heritage of our race, organic reform of our military system is imperatively demanded.

And again Mr. Sidney Low in his:—

I have said it before, but the obstinate truth cannot be reiterated too often or too urgently—the British Army in its present shape is simply not strong enough to garrison and police the Empire.

The reference closes:—"And how is this expansion of our forces, this reform of our military system, to be attained? Again the voices agree that the only way is compulsory military service—called by some less odious name. The volume of demand for this retrogressive measure is great, and it becomes steadily greater. The cry for conscription fills our periodicals and the editorial columns of the Jingo Press. It has been uttered even by so prudent a politician as Sir Robert Finlay. It has been echoed by Lord Lansdowne, who



last Session paved the way for the revival of ballot for the militia. Who will contend in these circumstances that the prospect of compulsory military service in this country is remote?"

"THE BRITON'S FIRST DUTY."

In 1901 appeared a most mischievous book entitled, "The Briton's First Duty: The Case for Conscription," by Geo. F. Shee, M.A., in which he argues for Compulsory Service, the character of which book may be gathered from the fact that he criticises the "Militia Ballot without substitution," as proposed by the Earl of Wemyss, although he says that, "on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread," he would "welcome it as offering some slight prospect" of bringing about what was desired (pp. 183, 184).

The Militia Ballot, however, he intimates, is wholly inadequate, and his book is a laboured argument against it, and for Compulsory Military Service, not only for home defence, but for Imperial purposes, the object being to establish a "National Army," practically an Imperial Army, which should be kept abroad, but supplied by drafts raised by conscription at home, or rather drawn from an immense reserve of men—a *Pan-Britannic Militia*, consisting of all able-bodied white men throughout the Empire.

Three things, he declares, are required to assure the safety of the British Empire. These are:—

1. *A strong Navy*, at least equal in strength to the combined forces of any two Powers—equal not merely in actual numbers, but having regard to the duties which the vast extent of our Empire and our sea-borne commerce lay upon our fleets.
2. *A highly-trained, long-service Army* for garrison and police duties in India and elsewhere.
3. *An immense reserve of men—a Pan-Britannic Militia*—consisting of all able-bodied white men throughout the Empire. This Militia would be essentially intended for home defence in whatever part of the Empire it happened to be raised, the Australian Militia for Australian defence, the Canadian for Canada, etc. It would *never* be called on for garrison duty away from home, but it would form a reserve of men who would be *called upon* to fill up

the casualties in the ranks of the foreign service army in time of war, and would reinforce it to any extent in a big war, such as we are engaged in at the present moment."

#### THE NATIONAL SERVICE LEAGUE.

The significance of this book, however, lies mainly in two facts:—

1. The formation, for the furtherance of the objects advocated therein, of the NATIONAL SERVICE LEAGUE, of which the author, Mr. Geo. F. Shee, became the Secretary.

2. And the further fact, announced in a letter to the *Times*, of January 8th, 1902, which was written by the Secretary of the Army League, and which stated that the copyright of this book had been purchased for cheap circulation by a number of influential persons (see "*Rocks Ahead*," pp. 10, 11); so that it became the propagandist literary organ of the League.

#### OBJECTS OF THIS LEAGUE.

The Duke of Wellington, in a letter to the *Times*, of April 11th, 1903, has represented the objects of the National Service League to be very mild indeed. This point, however, has to be carefully noticed, and it is a point which may be easily illustrated, that *one thing is said* and written in one place, and *another thing* is said and written in another place. In the "*Briton's First Duty*," *e.g.*, and at meetings held at the United Service Institution, reported in "*Our Flag*," schemes of conscription are written and talked of more burdensome and more alien to the spirit of the British Constitution than anything to be found abroad. And in letters to the newspapers, and in speeches elsewhere, the Swiss system, or even a modification of it, is talked of; "not conscription," they say, of course not; "mere training—the Briton's First Duty," etc. Anything, in effect; just "give us the principle of compulsion." But this principle of compulsion is the thing to be resisted; once admit this, and all the worst features of the foreign military slavery are let in. "You cannot stop there," said Lord Salisbury.



## IMPORTANCE OF THESE ORGANISATIONS.

The National Service League, which was founded at a meeting at Apsley House, has for its President the Duke of Wellington, and for committeemen and supporters, the Bishop of Chester, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Fife, Lord Meath, Earl Wemyss, Lord Newton, and, at their back, the British aristocracy. The Army League has the Duke of Beaufort as President, and a committee of men of position, largely Volunteer officers, who would naturally be largely benefited under the new system. Further, a Commission appointed, of course, by Government, is now sitting to hear evidence and advise thereon as to the Auxiliary Forces, the Chairman of which is the Duke of Norfolk, who is stated in the letter of the Secretary of the Army League to the *Times*, of January 8th, 1902, to have been one of the subscribers to the cheap edition of the "Briton's First Duty"; so the various parts of the movement become interwoven.

## PRESS ADVOCACY.

A significant incident in the drama occurred when Lord Wemyss, in the House of Lords, on calling for the revised Militia Ballot Bill, which Lord Hardwicke, the Under Secretary for War, would not produce, was referred by him to this Commission on the Auxiliary Forces then about to be appointed. It at least served as an advertisement for that Commission. The Press has been, of course, used for the purposes of educating and preparing public opinion. Rudyard Kipling's poem of "The Islanders" in the *Times*, various articles in the *Saturday Review*, others in the *Spectator*, and last, but not least, a series of articles in the *Times* in January and February last, form the chief literature on the matter. These articles differ little from each other. Some want conscription for foreign wars; some propose to limit it to home defence; while others want the French or German system, plus a foreign service army, plus forced service for foreign wars—a burden which no country bears, or could bear.

## THE "TIMES" ARTICLES.

The *Times* alone is more modest. These articles, which seem intended to influence the labours of the Commission, and to further the movement generally, have since been printed and published in pamphlet form. They are entitled, "The Problem of the Army." The scheme proposed is that of an Imperial Army.

"One of the first principles laid down," says an appended summary in the last article, "has been that our military system must be Imperial—that is to say, it must correspond to those ideas of Imperial unity and Imperial responsibility that have altered the whole character of the British State during the last generation, and are destined to change it still more in the next." This Imperial army, as is proposed, shall consist of three army corps besides the present regular army; one for the Cape, one for India, and one for Australia. The scheme proposes that a "home army for England" is to be raised; "all boys in public elementary schools to be drilled, and kept at school until they are seventeen," or "*that the whole boyhood of the nation between the ages of sixteen and seventeen should receive a military training, concurrently with the final stages of its mental training, and that every British subject, after having gone through this training, should be called upon to perfect himself by one or two further periods of training in the Militia, i.e. the 'home army.'*"

It may be noted that "one or two" is a vague term, and may mean anything—the two years' service of the French or German service is "*one period*" of training; and that this Home Army would be much the same thing as either the French or German Army, for the *Times* furthermore states, "*The Home Defence Army must be a regular army; it must be seriously and adequately organised for war; it must have a separate War Office and staff of its own; it must have a regularly permanent and adequately paid corps of professional officers.*" These are to be from the present regular battalions, which would be disbanded, and last, but not least, "*from the existing Militia and other auxiliary and irregular forces.*" There are, according to the proposed scheme, to be exemptions in the case of one or two favoured industries, neither of



these being either the agricultural or medical interests, which experts consider would suffer most from conscription, in consequence of English medical and agricultural arrangements differing so widely from those on the Continent. There are the usual remarks on the *moral* benefits of conscription, as to which all that need be said here is, that facts and figures show the results of military service on the Continent to be most immoral. There are also philosophisings on "Time is money," and that as the poor have no money to give, they can give "time," and so "taxation is equalised"; as if the poor did not bear the burden of the country's taxation already!

Stripped of their wearisome verbosity, these articles simply amount to an advocacy of the French system. The proposed "Home Army" corresponds to the present French Army (subject to the favoured industries exemption), and the small volunteer "Foreign Army" or "Imperial Army," to which the present army is to be reduced, corresponds to the "French Colonial Corps," for which men volunteer from the regular army. Except that foreign service, in event of war is not to be compulsory, and that some industries are exempted, the *Times* scheme agrees, on the whole, with those of the "Briton's First Duty," and of the *Saturday Review*.

#### CORRESPONDENCE IN THE PRESS.

As usual the plan of writing letters to the Press has been adopted with varying boldness, the object apparently being to foster familiarity with the idea of compulsory service, and to create the impression that the majority of citizens are in favour of it, or that it is the only course. On June 6th, for example, a correspondent in the *Times* roundly asserts that:—

"The immediate obstacle to an introduction of some system of universal service is now found in the 'sham of the Volunteers.' Members of these corps will now best serve their country by withdrawing from their regiments and leaving the nation to compel every able-bodied man to qualify himself to perform the first duty of a citizen."

The authorities, it is said, have been working to produce this result. We can well believe it.

In the same issue appears a letter by G. F. Shee, on behalf of the Executive of the National Service League, announcing

a lecture to be presided over by the Duke of Wellington in explanation of the Swiss system, in which he says :—

“There can be no doubt that a large and increasing number of the English people are coming to the conclusion that no organisation of our forces, military and naval, will be either final, sufficient, or economical which is not supported by the ancient constitutional system of universal compulsory training for home defence. Those who take this view do not, in casting about for a practical example of the working of such a system, look to the great military Powers of the Continent, knowing that their problems and needs are totally different from our own. They look rather to those countries in which a pure militia system is in force. Pre-eminent among these is the little Republic of Switzerland, a country with a glorious and heroic past, with a system of Government which seems to allow the utmost liberty of the citizen which is compatible with the safety and welfare of the State, possessing an admirable system of national education, holding a very high place among the industrial nations of the world, and no whit behind England in its enthusiastic love of freedom and its devotion to the cause of peace, progress and civilisation.”

So, forsooth, we must follow Switzerland in her folly, because of some supposed resemblance to ourselves in the very qualities it is sought to destroy. But two wrongs do not make one right, or two blacks one white.

#### PUBLIC SPEECHES.

Prior to this, in addition to the letter in the *Times* (April 11th, 1903) by the Duke of Wellington, in support of the National Service League, there has been, further, a speech of Lord Rosebery in the House of Lords, in which he talked of Switzerland, but did not directly advocate compulsion, for which he was twitted by Lord Newton, and the *Saturday Review*. This was followed by a speech of the Duke of Argyll, delivered at Bradford, in which he spoke of our “taking a leaf out of the Swiss book,” and advocated compulsion of a sort. And now, finally, there is the speech of the Chairman of yesterday’s meeting, still harping on the Swiss system, and the avowal of Lord Methuen, which associates the movement for conscription with Lord Wolseley, Lord Roberts, and Sir George White.



## THE SWISS SYSTEM.

As there is so much reference to Switzerland, it may be as well to note that that country is a Confederation of petty states, each having its own government, and existing wholly independently of each other, except as to the army, the customs, the Post Office, the railways—all of which are common, or “federal.” These little states which form the “Confederation” are, some of them, tyrannical oligarchies, while few, or none, are free in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word. A few facts may tend to prove this:—

In one canton (or state), forced labour on the roads—or the old *corvée*—was enforced until lately. In two other large cantons a handful of “Brethren,” or Protestants, was persecuted by the Conservative majority. The Liberals backed the “Brethren,” but, being in a minority, got the worst of it: bloodshedding and rioting resulted, and the Federal Government had to send troops to prevent these little countries lapsing back into the savagery of the early ages. In what is called the most democratic and enlightened canton in Switzerland, no man can gather his grapes, even though they may be rotting, until the time comes for taking off the “ban,” a relic of feudalism.

In Switzerland, however, there is no standing army, no military caste (as in France and Germany, and in all the English schemes), service is compulsory on all, and all officers, as well as privates, leave their business affairs for a short time in each year, and then return to them. A Swiss officer may be, and is often, a peasant, a small miller, or baker, working with his hands. “The boer is soldier, and the soldier is boer.” The real military defences of Switzerland are the rifle clubs—three or four thousand in number—all volunteers. Swiss marksmanship is what France or Germany dreads, or otherwise it is very possible that, notwithstanding its guaranteed neutralisation, short work would be made of Switzerland.

## THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE.

This talk of the adoption of the Swiss system by this country is but the introduction of the thin edge of the wedge of

compulsion, which, as has been urged already, however mild at first, would, and must soon, end in the full French or German system; the need of permanent positions and pay for the officers would necessitate that; and the forces of national rivalry and sentiment would both facilitate and hasten it.

#### CONCLUSION.

It is not necessary, on the present occasion, to discuss either the merits and demerits of any particular system or scheme of conscription, or the constituent elements of the sugar with which Lord Methuen and his friends propose to coat their pill. The point before us may be put thus. The matter of chief importance is that our artisan population, whom conscription would most directly affect, should realise without delay the imminence of a danger that would cause a revolution in their lives. Conscription for the defence of one's country is one thing, although it may not be the best kind of defence. Conscription for the defence or the expansion of an empire is another, and a very different, thing. As Mr. Frederic Harrison wrote in a timely article in the *Positivist Review*:—

German soldiers are not called on to serve out of their own country and its borders. British soldiers have to serve in every country, climate, and condition which the earth presents. Germans are only called out to protect their own country, or to attack those who menace it. British conscripts would not have to defend these islands, but to make war in the tropics, on the other side of the globe, in torrid deserts, in icy mountains, in poisonous swamps. No conscripts existing are liable to be sent off from their native country to distant lands and barbarous wastes. A certain amount of volunteer soldiers are willing to do it. But the supply is found inadequate. A few more millions of pounds annually in the Budget would add to the recruits; but that, we are assured, is not nearly enough. If conscription is introduced in England, it will have to be conscription under formidable conditions of service to which no conscripts in the world are exposed, conditions to which no free people have ventured to bind themselves.

How is this to be prevented? What is to be done?







